

CHAMPLAIN SPEAKER

February 1997

Vol 16 #7

THE LITTLE ICE AGE AND THE YEAR WITHOUT A SUMMER by Steve Cumbaa

"Cold? You think it's cold now? Well, when I was a boy...". Sure, Dad. Right, Grandpa. Uh huh. Yep. Sound familiar? There's a certain amount of the "Paul Bunyan" factor in all weather stories, but most are based on truth. After all, any story worth telling is worth embellishing. Nevertheless, this tale doesn't have any extra frills - it comes directly from carefully kept records and other hard scientific data as well as many historical accounts.

For a period of about 300 years, beginning in the mid 16th century (ca. 1550 A.D.), the climate in many parts of the world, including Canada, was characterized by wild extremes of temperature and humidity but was overall several degrees colder on average than what we have experienced in this century. It was the coldest period at any time since the last major ice age ended 10,000 years ago. People who study climate have called this "The Little Ice Age". This is the time when much of the exploration of Canada and other parts of the New World was taking place with Champlain passing by our neighborhood on his way up the Ottawa in 1613 and 1615. We can appreciate their hardships more with the knowledge that neither Canada's native peoples nor the European explorers and colonists had central heating, Gore-Tex, or the Weather Channel!

The coldest intervals during this time played havoc with plants and animals. Studies in northern Quebec show that the growth of spruce trees was stunted during this period and that the trees were widely scattered as they could not reproduce normally. The development of the thick forests in northern Quebec is a relatively modern phenomenon, since about 1860. The cod fisheries in the North Atlantic failed several times in the 17th and 18th centuries as the water became too cold (below 2^o C) for them to reproduce and survive. The onset of winter was often a month or more advanced. In November, 1574, two Spanish Basque whaling galleons were trapped in Red Bay, Labrador, as the harbour froze overnight. The thickening ice eventually crushed the ships before they could escape and the survivors were forced to winter over. There were many maritime disasters on a grander scale. The spread of Arctic ice and polar waters south changed weather patterns. The frequency of wild storms and flooding increased significantly, thus contributing to the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 and

killing thousands in England and Europe in floods in the 17th and early 18th centuries. Widespread famine from crop failure, especially wheat, was another consequence of wild weather in those years. Had it not been for the more cold and moisture-tolerant potato,

introduced to Europe from South America, starvation would have been worse.

One of the worst years of all was 1816, the year Perth was founded, which has been dubbed "The Year Without a Summer". The volcano Tambora in the East Indies had blown its top the year before; the largest volcanic eruption in recorded history (with a blast energy estimated at 3 times the total of world nuclear weapon stockpiles in the 1980s), killed 90,000 in Indonesia and blanketed the atmosphere with some 25 cubic miles of ash and debris. This volcanic dust reduced sunlight and lowered temperatures over much of the world, producing June, July and August freezes here in northeastern North America and other parts of the world. Famines and epidemics resulted, including the typhus epidemic in Europe of 1816-1819, and the first world-wide epidemic of Asiatic cholera, which lasted into the 1830s. Overall, hundreds of thousands perished. What few crops could be harvested sold for outrageous sums - the price of wheat in 1816 reached a peak not surpassed until 1972-73, during the Russian wheat shortage and the Arab oil embargo.

We have a continuing legacy of "The Year Without a Summer". Mary Shelley is reputed to have been inspired to write Frankenstein by the events of 1816, and Lord Byron's poem Darkness was composed in Geneva that year. The exceptionally cold winters of Dicken's first years, including 1816, are portrayed in his books, and the skies in landscapes by Constable and Turner owe their colour and texture to Tambora's lingering effects. Hmmm.... think I'll boost the thermostat a notch, make up some nice hot chocolate, and start packing for that Florida holiday...



Champlain Speaker Newsletter Staff

Newsletter Editor: Sue Robertson 724-5871
 Layout/Calendar: Barb Robertson 729-5439
 Distribution: Neil Robertson 729-5439
 Carriers: Shelley Cornelius, Kay Young, Sandy Milne
 Philip Cutfield, Patrick Mates, Jim Croft, Laura Robin, Becky Rynor, Jean Wevill, Wendy Huculak, Heather Pearl, Monique Kerr, Carole Anne Copeland, Linda Steele, Beth Buist, Nancy Leigh-Smith, Karen Maser, Marlene Kells, Jackie Crawford.

Champlain Community Association Executive

President: Tim Frank 729-0882
 Vice-president: Amy Kempster 722-6039
 Secretary: Laura Muldoon
 Treasurer: Kay Young 722-7955
 Special Events: Laurie Fagan 728-1945
 Membership: Jim Cocks 728-7881
 Neighbourhood Watch: Michael Cheng 722-3344

Sue's Word Find

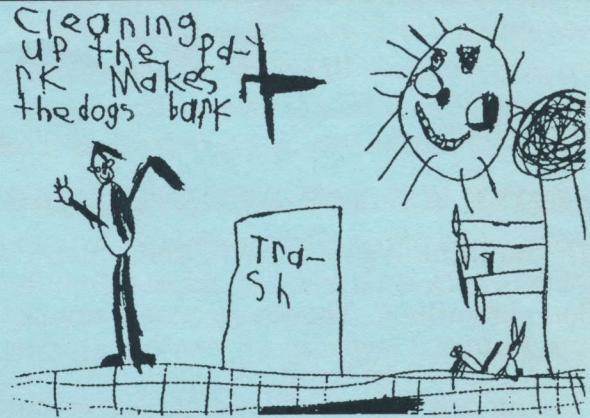
F E B R U A R Y D I P U C E E
 O L S D I K O N H O N E Y C V
 U C O U P L E S E S S I K A O
 R S S W E E T H E A R T L L L
 T S U N E V Y R L E W E J P T
 E R R E T R E A T U N E R E H
 E E H E R O S P E T H M R R G
 N V E E R E N N I D U U I I I
 T O A C S E G N Y E G F O F L
 H L R N U A E R S N S R P R E
 Y Y T A P H R O D I T E E O L
 D A S M G I F T S M N P C S D
 N D A O I E N I W E I A L E N
 A H A R R O W S O B A N E S A
 C H O C O L A T E S S D R A C

February, candy, fourteenth, chocolates, flowers, champagne, valentine, Aphrodite, romance, candlelight, love, cards, sweetheart, fireplace, jewelry, perfume, be mine, saint, arrows, Cupid, retreat, dinner, couples, kisses, hugs, Venus, lovers, hearts, gifts, no kids, eros, honey, wine, roses, day

Answer to last month's puzzle was:

Beat The Mid-Winter Blues

Just For Kids



Thank you Charlie Clark, age 5, for submitting this drawing on cleaning up our park.

UPDATE ON ZONING SUBMISSION FOR 2020Z BY-LAW
 by Lynne Bankier

Our submission will probably be addressed by the Committee of Planning and Economic Development on Tuesday Feb. 25. I was told by a staff person that I should receive a staff report regarding the committee's response to our submission prior to the meeting. I haven't yet received it. Anybody in the community who is interested in reading and responding to the staff report when I receive it and/or attending the meeting can call me at 729-0955.

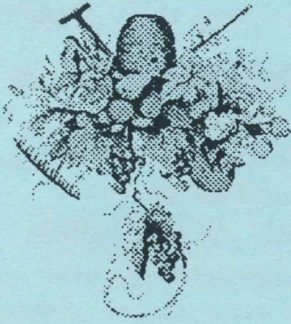
Editors Notes

Winter is now officially half over - a cause for celebration if there ever was one - let's hope that Warton Willie is accurate in his forecast of an early spring. We all know that when he sees his shadow it means six more weeks of lousy hockey. This year that especially applies to Canadian and Leaf fans. The lengthening days should help to bring us out of our collective long winter funk. Just remember ... only six more Mondays until Spring arrives (hopefully in more than calendar date only).

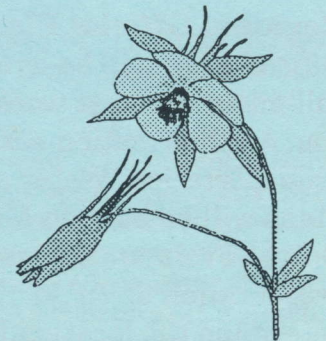
A special thank you to Charlie Clark for his contributions to the Speaker. We wish you good luck with your move and best wishes in your new home. Keep in touch.

HAPPY VALENTINES DAY to one and all.

Winter Dreaming and Garden Scheming



I have been doing a lot of reading lately about gardens and, admittedly, I find myself dreaming about spring, summer and fall. You remember those months without snow, when the grass was green and a warm breeze blew. It seems like decades ago now. But I have little things to look forward to: my gardening books and magazines, and the ever present seed catalogues that are now available from nurseries all across the country. The selections are so many I might as well just open a page, close my eyes and point. Whatever is there I will order. Under careful supervision I will will it into germination and hopefully share the sprouting green plant with my gardening friends to be planted in some special corner of the garden. But that is really the trick, the games of gardening-where to plant it. Will it like the soil, the sun, the shade? And when these decisions are made and the planting is done and the plans go awry, well, I can always dream of what I thought it might have looked like. I guess that is why I am looking forward this month's gardening meeting. Yes I am part of that frenzy that takes over the Fieldhouse the second Tuesday of each month. You would think with 150 members that we might get it right, but, that is the fun after all. The experimenting, the sharing, the looking in on neighbours' gardens and hearing how the experts make it all seem so easy. But I digress. This coming meeting I am hoping to learn some of those landscaping secrets that have alluded me. Or if I'm extremely lucky, I will win the grand prize of the raffle and have a landscaped design done for my garden personally by our guest speaker, Dallyn Lynde of the Ottawa Citizen. I know I won't leave the meeting empty handed or empty headed. I will have my scribbled notes, fellow members shared thoughts and will be inspired to dream even more of spring, summer and fall. I guess that is part of what Winter is about: to dream of a time when it is not here!



AMY'S CORNER

Amy Kempster 722-6039

Megaweek: As you are probably aware many changes were announced by the provincial government, in January: taking over education funding at the provincial level; amalgamating many school boards including the OBE and Carleton Public Boards; capping trustees salaries at \$5000 was just the start. The province proposes to download half the cost of welfare, long term health care, old age homes etc., all the cost of transit, etc. to the municipalities. Even David Crombie who headed the "Who does what?" Commission on disentangling responsibilities between the province and municipalities says that downloading welfare costs to the municipal level will be disastrous. Similarly the head of the group investigating health restructuring is critical of the downloading of long-term health care. The province seems to be disadvantaging central urban areas which have more welfare recipients and older citizens in favour of their surrounding satellite towns or suburbs. If you are concerned about what these changes could mean to your property taxes in 1998, write the Premier, and call your MPP, Richard Patten, at 722-6414.

Regional Budget: Regional Councillor Linda Davis will be hosting a meeting re the Regional Budget at 7 P. M. on Feb. 17 at 411 Dovercourt Community Centre. The Region received less money from the province than expected so there is a budget crunch. The takeover by the Region of garbage has meant these costs will increase for Ottawa Taxpayers but they may be offset by other changes. This is your chance to discuss the Regional Budget with your Councillor.

Regional Official Plan: The draft Regional Official Plan will be available on Feb. 7. If you call me in the next week I will pick up a copy for you. An information session on this and the Transportation, Water and Wastewater Master Plans will be held on March 25 at City Hall, Guiges-Freiman Rooms from 4-7 P.M. with a presentation at 7 P.M. The Official Plan will determine the location for growth in the region and could affect all neighbourhoods. Make your plans now to attend.

One-Tier?: So far the question of the future for governance in Ottawa-Carleton has been discussed mainly by the politicians. Councillors Karin Howard of Ottawa and Rob Fraser of Rideau Township have arranged a Forum on the issue on Feb. 24 at 7 P.M. at Carleton University in the new Minto Advanced Engineering Building, Max Bell Theatre (OCTranspo stop at door). Gardner Church will be there. Rogers Cablevision will cover this live so if you can not make it to Carleton you can watch it on cable.

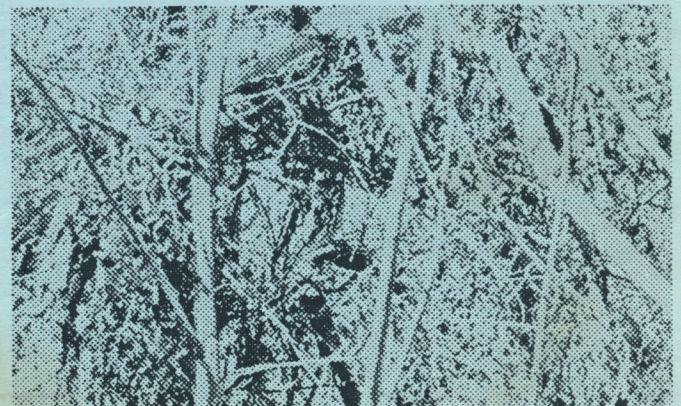
New Zoning By-Law: The Planning and Economic Development Committee will be discussing this on Tuesday Feb. 4 at 1:15 to 5 P.M. and 7 P.M. to 9 P.M. and at later meetings. Lynne Bankier tells me Champlain Park's concerns will not be discussed at that time but on Feb. 25, all day.

NOSS study: The City will be holding a workshop on Natural and open spaces (NOSS) on Wednesday, Feb. 12 at 7 P.M. at the new St. Laurent Complex, (Renaissance Room, beside the Library) 525 Côté St. This workshop will give the evaluation and placement of selected areas. Find out if our local woods are on the list and given a placement that is appropriate and will protect them. Amy can't attend this meeting. Would anyone else volunteer to go in her place. Please call Amy for details.

Variance for the Mosque: Reminder! The hearing will take place March 6. If you have concerns about this call me.

NATURE CORNER

Mr. Holliday submitted this photo of the saw-whet owl with the question can you find it in the trees? Saw-whet owls grow to 7 inches tall and have a wing spread of 17 inches. Their range is from coast to coast, north to the tip of James Bay and south of the Great Lakes. Maybe in the future he'll write a short story on birds for us.



FEBRUARY/97

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

2 Groundhog Day	3 Playgroup 9:30-11:30 a.m. <hr/> <i>Social Group meets at Fieldhouse 2 to 4 pm</i> <hr/> Aerobics Class 7-8 p.m.	4 Playgroup 9:30-11:30 a.m. <hr/> <i>Fly Fishing</i> 7:00 p.m.	5 Aerobics Class 7-8 p.m. <hr/> T'ai Chi 8:10-9:15 p.m.	6 Playgroup 9:30-11:30 a.m. <hr/> Yoga 7:30-9:00 p.m.	7 BLUE BOX	8 Chinese New Year
--------------------------------------	---	---	--	--	--------------------------	---

9	10 Playgroup 9:30-11:30 a.m. <hr/> <i>Social Group meets at Fieldhouse 2 to 4 pm</i> <hr/> Aerobics Class 7-8 p.m. <hr/> Fly Tying 9:00 p.m.	11 Playgroup 9:30-11:30 a.m. <hr/> Garden Club Meeting 7pm Shrove Tuesday	12 Aerobics Class 7-8 p.m. <hr/> T'ai Chi 8:10-9:15 p.m. <hr/> NOSS Workshop 525 Côté St. 7 p.m. Ash Wednesday	13 Playgroup 9:30-11:30 a.m. <hr/> Yoga 7:30-9:00 p.m.	14 BLUE BOX	15 Valentine's Day
----------	--	--	--	---	---------------------------	---

16	17 Playgroup 9:30-11:30 a.m. <hr/> <i>Social Group meets at Fieldhouse 2 to 4 pm</i> <hr/> Aerobics Class 7-8 p.m. <hr/> Regional Budget: 411 Dovercourt at 7P.M.	18 Playgroup 9:30-11:30 a.m. <hr/> <i>Fly Fishing</i> 7:00 p.m.	19 Aerobics Class 7-8 p.m. <hr/> T'ai Chi 8:10-9:15 p.m.	20 Playgroup 9:30-11:30 a.m. <hr/> Yoga 7:30-9:00 p.m.	21 BLUE BOX	22
-----------	--	--	---	---	---------------------------	-----------

23	24 Playgroup 9:30-11:30 a.m. <hr/> <i>Social Group meets at Fieldhouse 2 to 4 pm</i> <hr/> Aerobics Class 7-8 p.m. <hr/> Fly Tying 9:00 p.m. <hr/> One Tier Forum Carleton U. 7 p.m.	25 Playgroup 9:30-11:30 a.m. <hr/> Zoning By-Law Discussion - City Hall ALL DAY	26 Aerobics Class 7-8 p.m. <hr/> T'ai Chi 8:10-9:15 p.m.	27 Playgroup 9:30-11:30 a.m. <hr/> Yoga 7:30-9:00 p.m.	28 BLUE BOX	1 <i>ELMDALE SCHOOL'S BOOK FEST</i>
-----------	---	---	---	---	---------------------------	---

MARCH/1997

MARCH/1997

2	3 Playgroup 9:30-11:30 a.m. <hr/> <i>Social Group meets at Fieldhouse 2 to 4 pm</i> <hr/> Aerobics Class 7-8 p.m.	4 Playgroup 9:30-11:30 a.m. <hr/> <i>Fly Fishing</i> 7:00 p.m.	5 Aerobics Class 7-8 p.m. <hr/> T'ai Chi 8:10-9:15 p.m.	6 Playgroup 9:30-11:30 a.m. <hr/> Yoga 7:30-9:00 p.m. Mosque Variance hearing	7 BLUE BOX	8
----------	---	---	--	---	--------------------------	----------

***Playgroup will run every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30a.m.
 ***Aerobics Class Monday & Wednesday evenings, 7-8 p.m. for 19 weeks, Jan. 6 to May 14, 1997.
 ***T'ai Chi Classes Wednesday evenings, 8:15-9:15 p.m. for weeks, Jan 15 to Mar 19, 1997.
 ***Yoga Classes Thursday evenings, 7:30-9:00 p.m. for weeks, Jan 16 to Mar 20, 1997.

TO ADD ITEMS NEXT MONTH - CALL 729-5439

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Local Teens Interested in Work:

Tom Arnason	729-6639	Snow Shoveling
Rachelle	722-6303	Babysitting
Jessica	728-8413	Babysitting
Sarah	722-2687	Babysitting
Paul Ratsch	728-2583	Snow Shoveling
Rory Taylor	798-0036	Snow Shoveling

Looking for a day sitter in Champlain Park Area to look after two little girls, ages 24 and 6 months old. If interest call Frances Scolli at 592-6900.

We are sorry to see Christine Uriarte and family leave our area. Thank you for helping out as a Neighbourhood Watch Block Captain. We welcome Jackie Crawford as the new Block Captain in Christine's place.

WOMEN'S HOCKEY

The ice has been booked for the second season of woman's hockey in Champlain Park. All women are welcome to come out and play any Tuesday night (8 - 9 p.m.). No experience is needed. You must have a stick and skates and a helmet is recommended. For information call Kay Young at 722-7955.

NOSS study: The City will be holding a workshop on Natural and open spaces (NOSS) on Wednesday, Feb. 12 at 7 P.M. at the new St. Laurent Complex, (Renaissance Room, beside the Library) 525 Côté St. This workshop will give the evaluation and placement of selected areas. Find out if our local woods are on the list and given a placement that is appropriate and will protect them. Amy can't attend this meeting. **Would anyone else volunteer to go in her place. Please call Amy for details.**

EXTRA BOOKS???

Elmdale Public School is having it's annual Book Fest and if you have extra books taking up space in your house you can donate them to us. The books we collect go to Book Fest which is a book sale for our school. The money we raise at Book Fest will go to buying new books and supplies for our school. If you have any extra books please contact us at:

Kirsten Cole 728-0300

Julia DiLabio 725-3838

Jessica Robin 729-3037

If you would like to buy books, come to Elmdale's Book Fest. We will pick up books as soon as you call.

Elmdale's Book Fest is February 27 and 28, 1997.